2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, MuNgonde

vessel of milk and two stems of bananas. We do not carry her in triumph. The mothers-in-law do not bring the powdered medicine.' One informant maintained that the bride was always examined before she washed with her husband (if she was a chief wife) and we once saw the bride examined at the *ukwingesia* ritual, but the examination before handing over the bull is the only one mentioned by most people. What is certain is that virginity must be publicly demonstrated in the ritual and that it is honoured.

After the shaving and instruction, the bride goes round her father's village visiting the men who have not already given her a gift. She is accompanied by the wife of the go-between who represented her father in the marriage negotiations. Each of her father's fellow villagers (as well as her elder brothers and her father's full sisters) should give her something—a bark-cloth, a chicken, a calabash, a spearhead, or some coins, as he greets her. These the bride divides between her maids, the officiant who treated her in the ritual, her husband, and herself; to the wife of the go-between is due one pot of the beer brewed for the shaving ritual, to take home to her husband.

If the agreed number of marriage-cattle have been handed over, the bride's father puts millet to soak for beer immediately after the rite of instruction has been completed and the bull of puberty eaten. When the brewing is ready the bride is formally taken to her husband's house (*ukumbeka*) by a 'mother' and one or two of her maids. Her own mother never goes—the woman of the party is usually a junior wife of the bride's father or the wife of the go-between. They take with them one or two pots of beer, a basketful of plantains to roast for her husband, two or three cooking pots, a log of firewood, a calabash of light ointment (*inyemba*), and a little pot of brown ointment (*imbale*) for anointing her husband and his friends in the village. 'What the wife brings when she comes for the first time is for all the men of the village to use to anoint themselves. They come every day to use it until it is finished.' These ointments are brought by every wife but they are especially important if the bride is her husband's first wife, and it is his bachelor neighbours who mostly use them. The bride also brings the fine mat and several coarse ones which she has woven during her seclusion, bark-cloths she has made for herself, and three hearth bricks (*amafiga*) carefully moulded for her by her mother out of clay and manure mixed with medicines. These are set up in her

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, Mu Ngonde

585
354 new home, and her mother-in-law provides her with fire and a pot.

783 After the bride has had full intercourse with her husband she cannot return home, or see her own parents, until she has taken them the ritual *ilibalaga*. After sexual intercourse she wipes her husband's genitals with her hands, then wipes them on a fowl and some millet: these together form the *ilibalaga*. In the morning she goes off without washing—'with the filth of intercourse on her'—to her parents' house, taking the fowl and millet with her. The fowl is killed on a path and cooked with *ikipiki* medicine and, if the bride is the eldest daughter of one of the father's first two wives, her father and mother eat it together. Her mother eats alone if she is a younger daughter, or the mother is a junior wife. If the father is a chief the husband may kill a young bull and beef is sent in place of the hen.

834 After eating the *ilibalaga* her parents resume intercourse[1] which has been taboo from the time the girl first menstruated. If no hen is brought because the husband is poor, the parents still resume sexual intercourse, but the bride, when she visits her home, must not take water from her mother's pot. Someone else draws for her and she drinks it outside from a separate calabash. If she drinks
[753] inside, or if her mother uses the calabash she has used, it is believed that her mother will get diarrhœa. She also avoids her father's bed and stool.

606 With the ritual of marriage must be included the negative ritual of avoidance between a woman and her husband's father and between those identified with him or her. The taboo applies from the time of betrothal or, if the girl has been betrothed as an infant, from well before she reaches puberty, and forbids father-in-law and daughter-in-law ever to look at one another or meet face to face on the pathway, or enter the same house, much less speak together. As we have seen, a similar taboo applies between the bride
[184] and her own father during her seclusion, but is relaxed when he has given her a gift. Between a woman and her father-in-law, however, it is never relaxed, except among the more sophisticated
773 Christians. A myth of origin tells of a case of incest between father-
606 in-law and daughter-in-law which led to the establishment of the
811

[1] Kasitile maintained that if the mother has not reached the menopause the parents do not lie together until the daughter's pregnancy is apparent. 'For the mother to conceive before the daughter is forbidden, but old women are fruits sucked dry.' Mwakionde denied any danger in mother conceiving before daughter.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

One by one the villagers emerge from the houses, and sit in the sun, greeting neighbours with a polite 572 "Have you slept well?" if there are any neighbours [576] near. Then the husband milks the cattle, and the boys come to drive them out to the pasture, where they will remain until the early afternoon, when they are again milked.

Generally the cattle sleep in the same house as their 231 owners, tied up to stakes fixed deep in the floor; but 592 where there are grown-up sons not yet married, a separate house is built in which the parents sleep with the little ones, while the young men guard the cattle from raiding thieves.

The bed is frequently no more than a mat spread 573 on the mud floor, with a single blanket for covering, and no pillow, unless it is a piece of roughly trimmed wood. The more prosperous natives, earning good pay in the employment of Europeans, have well-made beds fully equipped, in many cases even with mosquito nets hung from the roof. The poorer consider that they have made a great step forward if they have been able to save up enough money to buy a single blanket, and not seldom even that belongs to the father, the mother and children having to be content with meagre coverings of calico or grass mats. But [354] the house is warm, often too warm, for the fire is always burning, the door is closed, there are no windows, and there is no ventilation in the roof; and all the inmates sleep with their feet to the fire, which is in the middle of the floor.

Here and there one will come upon rows of tiny 342 houses, each built and occupied by two or three small 561

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Haya FN8

H 342 As indicated above, the floor is covered with grass. Various domestic utensils may be seen, stuck into thin screens of plant material.

H 342 178 But this old, beautiful type of hut is very much on the decline. It is costly to make and to keep in repair, and the thick straw roof is, admittedly, highly inflammable. A flying trip round Lake Victoria clearly shows how the straw roofs in the banana groves are being replaced by corrugated iron. This change may even have another reason, viz. the fact that fodder for cattle is in short supply and that the grass for roofs is hard to come by. No doubt, it is a question of time when the fine old Haya hut will have disappeared.

N 114 In the Southern Highlands, where I was given the opportunity to stay for three months at various Danish mission stations, I visited the village round the Rungwe mission, the neighbouring villages of Ilolo and Kikota, and some villages near the Rutenganio mission station. I made a trip to Lake Nyasa and another to the Poloto mountains. I must admit to a limited knowledge of drawing technique and of house construction, but I have measured a number of houses and sketched their plan and also the furnishings I found in them. The positioning of the various objects has been established.

N 361 [342 356] The high standard of dwellings of the Banyakyusa is truly to be wondered at. The houses, clustered in villages, often along a winding street, lie intermingled with banana and coffee bushes. The houses are large and their interior is clean. Often two or three houses belong to one family, and, if so, will be grouped round a courtyard.

N 342 [824] Even if you could find houses built from sun-dried bricks and fired tiles, most were from bamboo with a grass roofing.

All houses stand on a clay base which, though not very high, no doubt means some protection against penetration of ground moisture during the heavy rains of April–June.

N [824] Besides bamboo, sometimes the bole of tree fern, *makeke*, is used in outer walls. Such tree fern stems have not the carrying capacity of bamboo, but they are far more resistant to rot. Among the other common features of the existing types of houses, should be mentioned the mud clods, the size of rolls that from the inside are pressed between the vertical bamboo poles; also, the inner wall is rough-

N [237] cast with a mixture of mud and cow-manure; the floor is from tamped clay. In

[531] some places you find very fine floors in which a pattern has been rolled into the wet clay; to this end a short length of the stem of the banana cluster has been employed, viz. the length between the seats of the male and the female flowers. Also employed are another plant stem, or an empty corn cob.

N 354 595 In all houses where women live, there are one or more hearths. The presence of two hearths in one house usually means that the husband has two wives, each wife having her own hearth, either in the common house or in a house of her own.

N 342 The houses always have a kind of ceiling made from bamboo sticks and carried

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa

342 353 parts. The partition wall was bamboo and mud. A doorway gave on to the inner part, where Tufwene had her bed.

354 There were two hearths, one in each room. The front one was not used. In the outer room was a bed for guests—a common feature of all houses. Tufwene was thought to be well off, and she had plenty of carrying rings, used by the 482 women when they carry loads, often very heavy, on their heads. The inner room was used for stores, including a number of earthen jars. She had three very fine, 352 low stools. I saw them outside in the sun, but their usual place was no doubt in the outer room, which had the character of a workroom. Here were the large 412 wooden mortar and its long pestle; also the grinding stone and in a corner the small mat, the *ulunyanya*, which is used to take up the newly ground flour. There 417 was also the ladder, used for fetching down firewood from the loft; you could see 415 the hen's nest, and the large water jar with its pointed bottom placed on three stones.

415 The third *isienga* belonged to an eighty-year-old woman whose husband had [769] died. She told me how every day she would fill a fine, decorated bamboo mug [53] with milk for him! These mugs, seen in all the houses, mostly have geometrical

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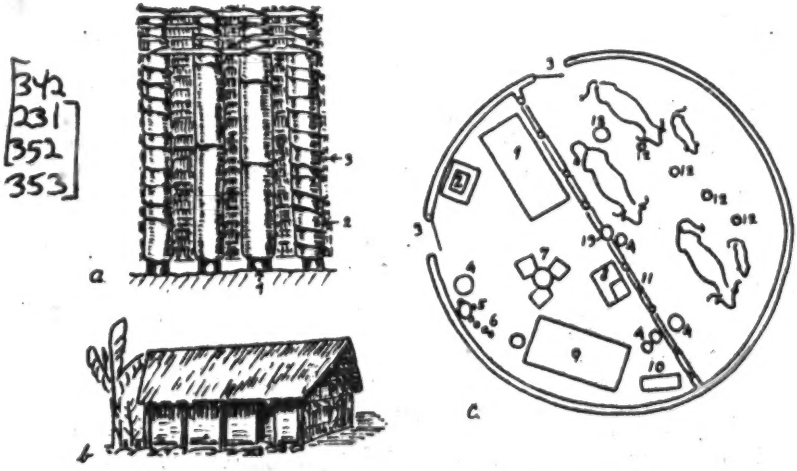

Houses belonging to Malia Ulinyehuaya and her husband.

a. Detail of *isienga*, outer wall. 1, tree fern stem joined to bamboo pole—note aperture for liquid manure; 2, bamboo pole with plant fibre windings; 3, split bamboo.—b, Malia's *ikibaga*. —c. Plan of *isienga*. 1, bed of the man; 2, iron chests for garments; 3, door; 4, posts supporting ceiling; 5, hen's nest; 6, hoes and pestle for the maize mortar; 7, hearth; 8, chests; 9, bed of the grandchildren; 10, roost from hollowed out trunk; 11, low partition; 12, posts for tying cattle; 13, centre post to top of roof.

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa

415 531

patterns burned into the bamboo; they are hung upside down so the dust will not settle in them. The bottom is the natural partition of the bamboo cane.

342

The house was standing on high, slightly slanting ground, and like the first mentioned house it was buttressed by a great number of thick branches. Incidentally, it seemed to be very old and rickety. Inside, there were a great many posts supporting the horizontal bamboo ceiling and the stores of firewood. All posts were bifurcated and held the beams solidly in place. The diameter of the house was the usual 6.5 metres, but in this case there was no inner partition. As this woman was very poor, she had no bed, but slept on a mat on the floor. Only very rarely is there no bed in the houses; I remember having seen this only three times.

[352 556]

354

The hearth was the usual type: three decorated square stones, rising to a height of 30 cm above the floor, but being sunk 70 cm into the ground. Here they were positioned on one side, to ensure that the centre post would not catch fire, and to make for easy escape of the smoke through the doorway. None of the houses have other means of smoke outlet.

352 [231]

Alongside the wall were calabashes, jars, and baskets; material for the baskets; and a little away from the wall, the large mill-stone and its appurtenant smaller grinding stone. A hen's nest was not missing either. Along one side was fitted a small under-ceiling for the storage of small things. Two or three bananas, meant to be her next meal, were lying on the floor near one of the posts. From the loft she reached down a calfskin in which she had been carrying her child. Its inside was of a reddish colour.

[482 237]

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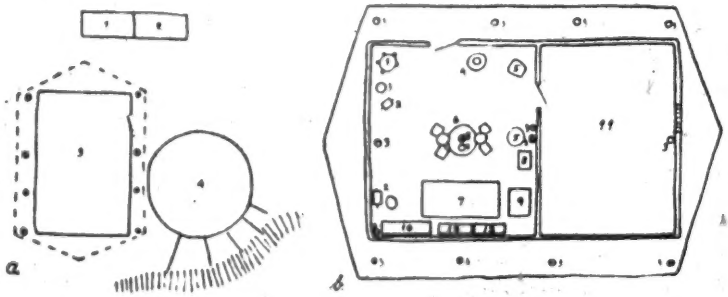

a. Site plan of Malia Ulinyelusya's houses. 1, hen-coop; 2, drying-racks for crops; 3, Malia's *ikibaga* with roof supports along sides; 4, *isienga* belonging to Malia's husband, with buttresses at low ground.—b. Plan of Malia's *ikibaga* (barred window in back room). 1, hen's nest; 2, *ikitoto* (stool); 3, posts (those going up to ridge of roof are filled in); 4, large basket; 5, basket; 6, clay base round twin posts; 7, Malia's bed; 8, chest; 9, wooden chest; 10, table; 11, back room, having bamboo ceiling carried by bamboo cross beam (between posts marked 3); the room is used for storing clothes, etc.; 12, shelves.

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa

342 Another old woman lived in a neighbouring *isienga* close by—if possible even more sparsely furnished than the last mentioned.

Common features of the round houses were: their size, the wooden centre-post, the ceiling covering the greater part of the room, the supporting posts for the beams that carry the bamboo joists and the ceiling proper; the building materials bamboo and mud; and the positioning of the hearth slightly off centre.

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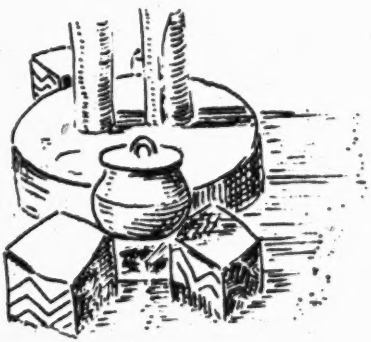


The two hearths of Malia's house. A clay base surrounds the twin posts, thus serves to fireproof them. Two hearthstones at either side form the hearths, the clay base acting as the third 'stones'.

178 342 The differences between this *isienga* and the original round-type house are: the angle of the wall, here vertical (as opposed to the inclination of the wall of the original house); the entrance (here without ornaments); the door itself also without ornaments; and further the fact that the clay cobs placed between the bamboo poles were here not the shape but only the size of rolls. The pictures presented by Fülleborn clearly show the carefully formed clay balls in the wall.

[53] As distinct from the old-type house, this new type of house has no decorations on the inside of the wall, but in some instances decorations are found on the floor.

342 Another type of house, again, was rectangular, often very long, with a ridge-beam roof. In most cases, these houses were buttressed along both sides, and were thus provided with what you might call two verandahs. Sometimes also the gables of the houses had buttresses. The roof projected over the gables, most near the ridge. The roof sagged in the middle, a fact that was already observed by the scholars mentioned. This may be because the ridge-beam is not dry but freshly cut, when it is mounted in its place. During the subsequent drying process under load it will then be brought to sag—as we know from other types of houses.

This house is called an *ikibaga* and is known to be typical of the Nyakyusa since olden times. Literally, *ikibaga* means stable or cowhouse, thus presumably indicating its original purpose. There is a full description of this house in Fülle-

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342 solitary or in a row some distance from the other houses of the village. They were never roughcast with mud).

Nearly all the *ikabaga* had a post-supported verandah. I measured up and drew sketches of two houses of this type, one belonging to the above-mentioned woman called Malia, whose husband lived next door in an *isienga*. She was a Christian—actually a church-elder. On the outside of her bamboo-framed, mud-
342 roughcast wall, she had drawn a church in yellow, red, and black colours, and
532 below she had written the word *kanisa* (church). Apart from a house near Lake Nyasa, of which I took a photograph and which had very modernistic and drastic drawings on its outside wall (crocodiles, a man and his bicycle, a man with his firearm), it is the only instance in which I saw any kind of coloured decoration on a house. Besides impressed patterns in clay on hearth and floor, I saw no decorations on the inside or outside of houses, except fine patterns in the outside wickerwork of the wall.

342 In this house, approximately 8 metres long, there were two vertical supporting posts, reaching to the very ridge of the roof, where presumably they were joined to the ridge beam. However, the beam could not be seen.

● 354 The hearth was peculiar in that it consisted of two pairs of hearthstones near a clay base that surrounded a supporting post and a shorter post. Thus two hearths were available, at the same time serving as fire-proofing to the posts. Though Malia was a single woman, the house had two hearths. You might think that she had seen a stove and had found that two cooking places would be useful. I saw this arrangement in one more place, in the house of a widow, who—by the way—was also a Christian.

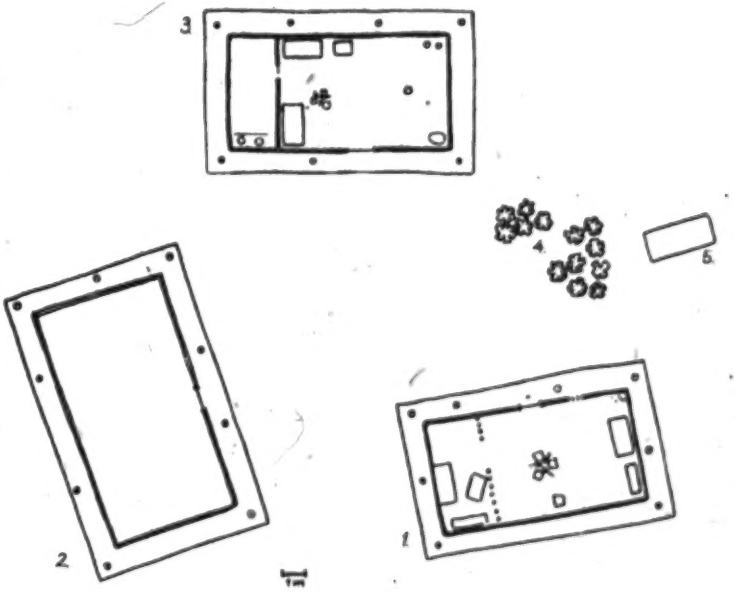
353 A space nearly half the size of the house was partitioned off, the half-wall having a doorway. This room was for stores only, clothes etc.; it had a barred window. Besides the hearths, the living-room had hen's nests, stools, baskets,
[352] Malia's bed (2 m by 1 m), table, wooden shelves, boxes, and a chest. These last-
[797] mentioned objects she had had no difficulty in obtaining from the neighbouring joiner's workshop belonging to the mission.

342 The other *ikibaga* is from quite a different district, that of Rutenganio. It was a very long house, as often seen in this locality, 26 metres long. I was told that

The type of house called *ikuna*, or *isiwa*.

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa

342 [353 361]



Three houses belonging to one family, situated round a common courtyard; the doors open on to the yard. The village street is along the back of the house at top. 1, Isefina's house; 2, Baba's house; 3, Idina's house; 4, banana plants; 5, hen-coop.

houses existed which were 60 metres in length. It had the same width as Malia's house, approximately 5 metres. The roof was supported by posts along the sides and at the gables.

[595 354 531]

Two women lived in this house, both married to the same man. Consequently, there were two hearths, the stones of which were cylindrical-conical, broadening slightly at the top. All were decorated. Each woman had her part of the house, both with an outer door, and further there was a door, slightly narrower, between the two parts, and a fourth door to a store-room. No less than twelve posts supported the roof, all reaching to the ridge. The two parts were a bit unequal in size; nearly half of each had the well-known loft for firewood, etc. One part contained beds for the woman and her husband (one bed had 100 straw mats). The children had two beds. The husband had still another house, a short distance away at the foot of a hill, they said. I did not see it. The other woman's room held her bed and a cot.

[353] [352]

354

The hearths of both rooms were placed in the centres, between two upright posts. Utensils and furnishings did not differ much from the usual: hen's nests,

352 415

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

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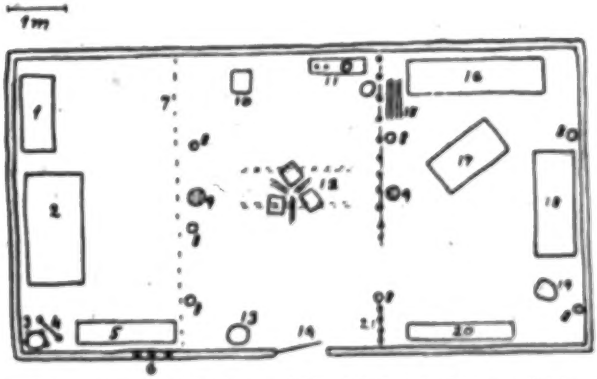


Iselina's house. 1, cupboard with shelves; 2, children's bed; 3, hen's nest; 4, ladder; 5, roost; 6, barred window; 7, from dotted line towards the right is the bamboo ceiling; 8, from here issue 5 horizontal bamboo sticks on which the bamboo ceiling is supported; 9, Posts supporting roof; 10, chair; 11, low shelf with two bamboo jars and a water jar; 12, hearth with three hearthstones and sticks under ceiling for carrying the fine basket, and corn-cobs hung up to dry, etc.; 13, beer jar; 14, door; 15, mats behind the low partition; 16, shelf for domestic utensils; 17, child's bed; 18, Iselina's bed; 19, baskets; 20, domestic utensils; 21, low partition between rooms.

found. In the front part of the Kikoła house, serving as an entrance room, were four posts called *ikingi*, to which two cows were tied at night.

This part, which we may call the cowhouse, also housed hen's nests, the roost, [231]
and the mortar to be used for maize, etc.

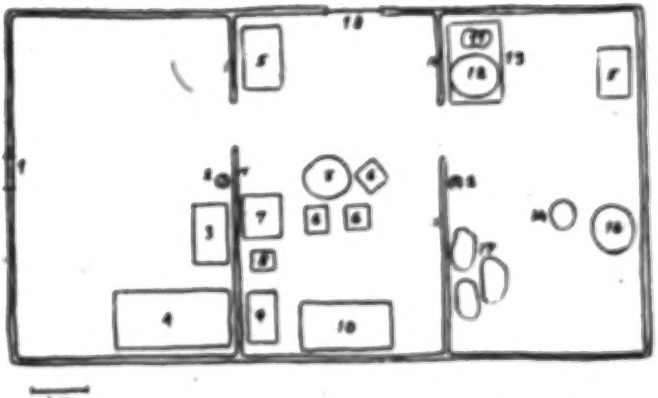
The hearth, consisting of one square and two round hearthstones, was placed [354]
in the centre of the living-room part. Here were also water jars and the woman's bed. This means that even if this type of house had a roof of a different shape and was always provided with a verandah with posts supporting its roof, the [542]
interior was really designed on the same lines as the short *ikibagá*, but it was meant to house only one woman, or one man, as we shall see below.

We may imagine that one of the reasons why the type of roof was changed, 342
was the weakness of the pointed roof of the *ikibaga*. It could often be seen to have 178
a tendency to fall in, and had to be supported by a post. Even in Fülleborn's illustrations, e.g. plate 64 c, a kind of reinforcement can be seen at the edge of the roof. No doubt the roof of the *ikuna* does not suffer to the same extent from this flaw.

New houses were being built to this design, and I suppose that a little more 342
than half the number of the houses were of the *ikibaga* type, and a little than half the *ikuna*.

In the village of Ilolo, I surveyed three houses belonging to one family, a [361]

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17 Nyakyusa



1 m

Baba's house. 1, barred window; 2, posts supporting roof; 3, wooden chest; 4, Baba's bed; 5, table; 6, chair; 7, cupboard; 8, chair with three suitcases; 9, suitcase; 10, table with bookshelf; 11, bag; 12, large basket, *ilimbo*; 13, low stand for 11 and 12; 14, millet jars; 15, low partitions; 16, *dilulo* in which the millet is washed; 17, rice in bags.

cupboard. This seemed very strange and a bit disorderly. On a chair were three suitcases on top of each other.

It was interesting to see, in the store-room, the very crops that belong to the man, viz. rice and millet, the most valuable produce. The rice was in bags, and it is quite probable that this man had bought it from the districts near Lake Nyasa, where it thrives well. On higher ground, rice cannot be cultivated.

The millet was contained in a basket, 1 m in height, 55 cm broad at the bottom, and narrower, 35 cm, at the top.

Further, there was a large, beautiful earthenware jar, which he had bought. This was intended for the millet. And there was also a cylindrical container for the washing of the millet when it was brought home from the field. This vessel was 55 cm in height and 85 cm across.

All three houses had a small window with bars or shutters.

The inside of the houses lay in semi-darkness, as the only light is admitted through the doorway, and in some cases through the diminutive barred window. Nevertheless, the interiors give a nice impression, because of their tidiness, height, size, and cleanness. And how cosy they are, when seen at night; the door is closed, you gather round the fire and delight in perfectly cooked rice, which is the favourite dish at this principal meal of the day.

Johnston says (1897, page 433) that the greater number of the houses are circular in their plan and very much like bee-hives in shape; their walls are wickerwork filled with mud cobs, and they have thatched roofs. He also reports

462 142 F. Rudolf Lehmann

252 very substantial, the main meal being taken in the evening shortly
264 before sunset.

415 *8. Manufacture.* The pot for cooking *(indeku)* is placed on three
[354] stones which form the hearth *(ikipembero,* hearth stones). The flat bowl made of clay used for the needs of the kitchen is called *ulwangabia* and a pig pot used for storing water *ingumbe.* The pots of clay
415 are manufactured by Kissi women because in their land on the north-
439 eastern shores of Lake Nyassa the best clay is found. In the eastern part of the Nyakyusa country adjacent to Kissi land the women visit the pottery markets of the Kissi, but to the remoter villages, e. g. around the Rungwe volcano the pottery is brought by Kissi men. In this case, owing to the great distance from the Kissi-Land the men carry the loads of eight to ten pots on their head between split poles of bamboo. The Kissi pots I saw in the Rungwe Station were ornamented in
[462] a rough way with red ochre and seemed only slightly baked. The
[324] hearth stones, however, are made by the Nyakyusa women themselves as I was able to observe near Rutenganio, where widows manufactured them for sale.

285 In many villages of the Nyakyusa I could watch basket-making. This
[462] I saw being done by men. In the chief's hut in Katumba I had the opportunity to admire a great number of very big baskets *(ifitubu)* for
[237] storing grain, smeared with cow dung on the outside. The attractive closely wickered baskets, which are filled with *malesi* (millet) and then
[273] placed in water for a night in the process of beer-brewing were originally made by the Buanyi, but nowadays also the Nyakyusa are said to be skilled enough to weave them. I had no opportunity to observe it, but could acquire an excellent specimen of that wicker-work.

264 *9. The Meal.* At the beginning of each meal the hands are washed,
[515] including those of children. The men take their meal separately from the women. The wives only eat when their husbands have been satisfied. Boys under ten years eat with their mothers, but as soon as they begin to live in age-set villages, they eat together with their friends of their own age-set, as described in detail by Mr. G. Wilson in his "Introduction of Nyakyusa Society" (Bantu Studies X, p. 271). The head of the family likes to eat together with his friends.

262 Meat is eaten very seldom, but on special occasions such as marria-
[192] ges, death lamentations, christenings of Christianized natives, enormous quantities are devoured. *Inyama* (Swahili: *nyama)* is the Nyakyusa word for all sorts of meat, *ingombe* for that of cattle and *ingambaku* for that of oxen. Near Utengule I saw black pigs *(inguruwe,* pig)